A5-9: Moving Toward an Earlier Diagnosis of Ovarian Cancer: An Integrated Review of the Literature

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Abstract:
Introduction: Ovarian cancer is the most lethal of the gynecologic cancers, killing 15,000 US women each year attributed to the inability to diagnose the condition at an early stage. The vagueness of presenting symptoms and the lack of effective screening and diagnostic tools contributed to the oftentimes late diagnoses with poor outcomes. CA125 may not be apparent in early disease. Additional markers to diagnose ovarian cancer have been discovered. A comprehensive and integrative review of the literature was conducted to synthesize the most recent reports.

Method(s): A search of Ovid using the terms early diagnosis, detection, screening, diagnostic tools, and biomarkers were crossed with ovarian cancer/carcinoma to yield 229 articles published in the last three years.

Results: Identification of biomarkers that, when used in combination, are capable of detecting ovarian cancer while at early stages. These assays used in conjunction with other assessments such as manual exam, the Ovarian Cancer Symptom Index (OCSI), symptom diaries, and transvaginal ultrasound achieve the sensitivity and specificity required of diagnostic tools. To date, the five serum biomarkers showing the most promise are apolipoprotein A-1, transthyretin, Beta2=Microglobulin, transferrin, and CA-125. Ova1, approved by the FDA (September 2009), is an immunoassay comprised of 5 proteins that is used to indicate the likelihood of a tumor’s malignancy prior to surgery or biopsy. This test can be used to determine which women presenting with pelvic masses need to be referred to a gynecologic oncologist.
**Discussion & Conclusions:** Women should be taught the symptoms of ovarian cancer: (1) abdominal bloating, (2) pelvic or abdominal pain, (3) difficulty eating or feeling full quickly, and (4) urinary urgency or frequency. Any woman experiencing these symptoms should be encouraged to maintain a symptom diary and schedule an appointment with her provider. Nurses have the responsibility to follow up on vague, but persistent symptoms and to stay informed on the latest progress in the diagnosis of this deadly disease.

**Abstract History:**
This abstract has not been presented or accepted for presentation in whole or in part at the SNRS or other scientific meeting.

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The FDA has cleared all pharmaceuticals and/or medical devices for the use described in this presentation.

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